

THE EUGENICS REVIEW

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"Eugenics is the science which deals with all influences that improve the inborn qualities of a race; also with those that develop them to the utmost advantage."—
Sir Francis Galton, 1904.

NOTES OF THE QUARTER

World Population and Resources

THE strength of the *Eugenics Society* lies not in its numbers but in the influence it can exert, through farsightedness, at a high level. A decade ago it was the Population Investigation Committee, stimulated and catalysed by the *Society*, which paved the way for the Royal Commission on the Population of Great Britain. Today the *Society* is jointly sponsoring with PEP (Political and Economic Planning) a general study of the population-resources complex. Several members of the *Society's* Council are active members of the working group which has already met regularly for more than a year. It is in the ability to sponsor such efforts that the *Society* plays so important a part, but this ability itself depends, apart from the zeal and abilities of its members, upon the fortune of endowment. The maintenance and further building of this endowment, which is the provider of freedom to influence, is of great importance.

The task of this PEP group is to assess, accurately and fairly, the whole of the most

complex situation which springs from the immense recent growth in world population, desired standards of living and consumption of resources. Trends for the future, both short-term and more distantly ahead, must be assessed so far as the evidence will allow, no less than measurement of the present. That, roughly, is the stage so far reached: the group's first Broadsheet *World Population and Resources* appeared on April 26th, 1954.

The group's next task is the study of the repercussions of the one fundamental and inevitable conclusion of the first Broadsheet—that desirable and spreading death control must be matched by a correspondingly admirable and widespread birth control. This second task is expected to result in a second Broadsheet, to be published in July, in time for circulation to the delegates and others before the World Population Conference in Rome in September 1954. If we can there exert an appropriate influence much will have been achieved. The deliberate and widespread limitation of numbers must surely, before long, result in a far greater appreciation of the genetic qualities of those who shall be born.

Meanwhile, two days after its appearance, Broadsheet I became the chief background document to an important debate in the House of Lords,* introduced by Lord Samuel on April 28th, 1954. Some efficient staff work, in the distribution of advance copies of the Broadsheet, yielded good fruit.

Lord Samuel's motion was designed "to draw attention to the continuing and rapid increase in world population and to the need for increasing world production of food and raw materials if present standards of living

* *Hansard*, 187, 63.

are to be maintained and improved. . . .” Foremost among those taking part in the debate was Lord Simon of Wythenshawe, a Councillor of the *Society*, and a prime mover in all these considerations today. With but minor exceptions the whole debate was at the highest level. Lord Samuel spoke, as was to be expected of the elder statesman and philosopher, with a broad vision and warm humanity, even if his optimism as to the realization of potentialities exceeded what the authors of the PEP Broadsheet would allow as reasonable.

Lord Macdonald of Gwaenysgor spoke greatly to the point and stressed, as does the PEP Broadsheet, the immense importance of the ferment in India over her population problem, a matter which has been so ably faced at last by her Registrar-General. Lord Boyd-Orr was filled with a proper idealism but has lost his excessive optimism of a decade ago. The Lord Archbishop of York was refreshingly outspoken and understanding. The evolution in outlook of the Primates would astonish T. H. Huxley who so ably argued the evolution of the primates with their predecessors just a century ago.

The strictures of Lord Hudson upon the PEP Broadsheet were quickly condemned by Lord Beveridge, that wise and critical thinker. Lord Simon of Wythenshawe had exerted, in fact, his chief influence before ever the debate began. But by quotation and by taking India as his special example he sharpened the spearhead of progressive understanding. He ended with the hope that the House would be informed that through the Medical Research Council or in any other way, all possible progress was being made with the development of appropriate means of mass birth control.

The middle of the debate exhibited some tendency to look backwards rather than forwards, and some show of inability to appreciate the importance of the relative rates of actions of the factors involved. Lord De La Warr wound up for H.M. Government in terms of the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organisation, of the Colombo Plan, and of the Colonial Development Corporation. He stressed that he

would not deal with the problems of birth control because great countries like India would not welcome it—“it is primarily a question first for the countries concerned and then for the individuals concerned.” His words were perhaps statesmanlike but they would have been far more positive had he himself attended the Bombay Conference at the end of 1952.

There is no doubt that the debate marked an important forward step in understanding, if not in early progressive policy. The *Eugenics Society*, through its joint effort with Political and Economic Planning, played a part of which it may quite suitably be proud.

The Galton Lecture

THE Galton Lecture, which is printed in full elsewhere in this issue, was delivered on February 16th, 1954, by Professor F. A. E. Crew. The Chair was taken by Sir Alexander Carr-Saunders, who said that at the Galton Lecture, the great annual event of the *Eugenics Society*, delivered in memory of its founder, Sir Francis Galton, the Chair was usually taken by the President of the *Society*. This was not possible this year for the very good reason that the President, Sir Charles Darwin, was at present in Siam. Sir Alexander said that he himself was very glad that he had been invited to preside, for it brought him into contact again with Professor Crew, and he well remembered how, when they both held corresponding posts in natural history, one at the School of Zoology at Oxford and the other at Edinburgh University, they had met and made plans for transforming and reforming the methods of presenting the subject they were teaching.

Professor Crew's first interest had been in genetics, while Sir Alexander had turned to the social sciences; later, Professor Crew had also stepped aside from the exact sciences and had crossed the bridge between the natural and the social sciences.

A vote of thanks to the lecturer was proposed by Dr. A. S. Parkes, who said that speaking after Professor Crew was not an easy task—the standard was too high—and in the ordinary way he would not relish the prospect. He had, however, special

reasons for being very glad of the opportunity of doing so. For one thing, in all the years that their paths had been crossing at meetings he had not previously had the pleasure of proposing a vote of thanks to Professor Crew. For another thing, the occasion gave him the chance of recalling the first occasion on which he had heard him speak. This was at a meeting more than twenty-five years ago, organized by the British Social Hygiene Council. He was young and impressionable at the time, and had admired very greatly the skill with which Professor Crew dealt with a tricky subject and handled an audience which was, one might say, highly specialized. The experience of listening to Professor Crew was a salutary one for a young man, because at that time it was fashionable to say that the scientist was the only man who had anything worth while to say, and the only one who did not know how to say it. This aphorism seemed to imply also that anyone who knew how to say what he wanted to say could not be a good scientist. After listening to Professor Crew on that early occasion he had hastily to revise this popular concept.

But, Dr. Parkes continued, what had brought him to this lecture was not so much that Professor Crew was speaking, but that he was speaking on the eugenic implications of the Welfare State. To those whose outlook was essentially biological, and who did not worry too much about the philosophical background of life, the establishment of the Welfare State was an extremely interesting experiment, and made one regret the improbability of living long enough to see the results. Professor Crew had indicated very well indeed some of the major features of the experiment. One question which appealed to Dr. Parkes was a very general one, namely, whether biological material—and man was essentially biological material—no matter how much the fact was overlaid by other considerations—whether biological material could be handled in such an unbiological way without disaster. Development of this theme posed another question, whether as a matter of logical principle the State could continue for an indefinite period

to take full responsibility for everyone who was born without having any control over who was born. Another aspect of urgent importance at the present time was of particular interest to one whose work lay in medical research. In the old-established countries the shift in the age structure of the population, the vast increase in the number of old people, and other changes, with their profound social and economic implications, were a direct result of medical effort. In the less developed countries the effort was producing great increases in total population by decreasing the hitherto very high mortality rates. At present it seemed that medical science was interested mainly in keeping people—good, bad and indifferent—alive. We might hope that, at a later stage, medical science would begin to show an interest in the quality and quantity of those likely to benefit by its efforts and in general to feel responsible for the demographic and eugenic effects of its work.

These, said Dr. Parkes, were some thoughts prompted by Professor Crew's most instructive and stimulating address, "and," he added, "on behalf of the *Eugenics Society* and every member of this audience, I should like to offer him our most hearty thanks. Professor Crew, you have given us much food for thought—food most attractively served and beautifully cooked! Thank you."

The Darwin-Osborn Correspondence

SIR CHARLES DARWIN writes: I am glad to have the opportunity for commenting on the various comments that have been made on my comments on General Osborn's comments on my book. I refer to the letters published in the last number of the *REVIEW*.* In the first place I would like to say that I recognize the justice of Mr. Usher's point, that Osborn was only making an after-luncheon speech, and that it is hardly fair to bring the heavy artillery of a whole book to bear against what was said on such an occasion. Still he did devote a good deal of his time to expressing disagreement with my views, and some answer seemed justified.

* April 1954.

But I agree with Mr. Usher in hoping that Osborn will do what he suggests and bring out *his* heavy artillery against me.

The next point to be noted is that some people seem to consider that, if planned parenthood were universal, it would *for ever* solve the problem of over-population. I am ready to agree that it may produce some effect during the next few decades, but that is quite a different matter from producing a permanent effect, and I rather think Mrs. Bosanquet agrees with me about this. The belief that the effect will be permanent implies a simple faith in the reasonableness of mankind that is far beyond past experience or future expectation. It is a much more extreme assumption, for example, than that of the older economists of the "economic man," which was so often disappointed. It is a much less probable expectation because in their economic actions people after all do try to act according to cold reason, whereas all matters of family are necessarily charged with strong emotions. If the troubles are to be overcome by free family planning, it suggests an imaginary scene something like this. A South American, say, five hundred years hence, looks up from his evening paper and says to his wife: "My dear, I see that the population of England rose last year by 0.13 per cent which wasn't expected. What a nuisance. We mustn't have that child we planned for next year, because life would be too hard for it." That is a caricature of course, but it is the sort of thing that would have to happen if population increase is to be permanently checked by *free* family planning.

Mrs. Bosanquet refers to the difficulty of thinking realistically about times more than eighty years ahead. The sort of predictions one can make about the near future are different in quality from those for the remote future; the difference is like the difference between forecasting whether it will rain tomorrow, and saying whether the climate of some country is rainy enough for it to produce good crops. In my book I avoided the first type of prediction for the most part, but I would like to look at it now, and my conclusions are rather opposite to those of Mrs. Bosanquet. The population

of the world is at present increasing at a rate that will double it in about a century. This increase can certainly not be stopped at once, because people are very much bound by habit and tradition, so that it must take at the least a generation, and more likely two, to get the new tradition of family limitation widely established, and all this time the numbers will be still increasing. On the other side of the account agriculturists tell us that by very good organization it should be possible to double the food production of the world, but that to go further than this would need some quite new discovery of which there is no present prospect. It is not to be expected that weak human nature could ever rise to this level of very good organization—it would indeed probably imply universal slavery to do so—so that an increase in food production of fifty per cent is about as much as can reasonably be hoped for. Moreover the change from traditional methods of agriculture to these new methods could hardly be accomplished on the world scale under one generation, and more likely two. So the best that can be hoped for is that agriculture and population should continue to strike a balance for perhaps sixty years, and at the end of that time agriculture will have reached its limit. Is it really likely that planned parenthood can be made so efficient in the next sixty years that world increase of population should cease, and that the population should then remain constant at that level for evermore? Even if this picture has been oversimplified, it does suggest the extreme urgency of the situation, and the probability that during the lives of many now living there will be a great worsening in the general conditions of life on the earth.

Turning now to Mr. Barnett's letter, I accept his criticism that human instincts are different in quality from those which tell the bird how to build its nest, or the bee how to make the honey-comb. In fact the word may have acquired a technical meaning among zoologists that excludes humanity. I have been conscious of this possibility when I have used the word, but that does not exclude the existence of something loosely

similar in mankind. We do all have feelings and show reactions about matters of life and death, and of sex and family that are not purely rational, and they drive us with tremendous impulse. Incidentally Mr. Barnett says that there is no neuro-physiological explanation of these matters yet known, and it must be very encouraging to the researcher in zoology to see what a fruitful field there still remains here for him to explore. However, there is one point in Mr. Barnett's letter that is very germane to my subject. He says that the human nervous system is entirely plastic, so that it can be moulded in any way desired. This means that it has no permanence, and if moulded in one direction now, there is nothing to prevent it from being moulded in an opposite direction a thousand years hence, and indeed past history shows that this sort of thing has often happened. If I had not believed that the results of this plasticity would average out in the very long run, I would not have ventured to be nearly so definite about what I have called average world-history.

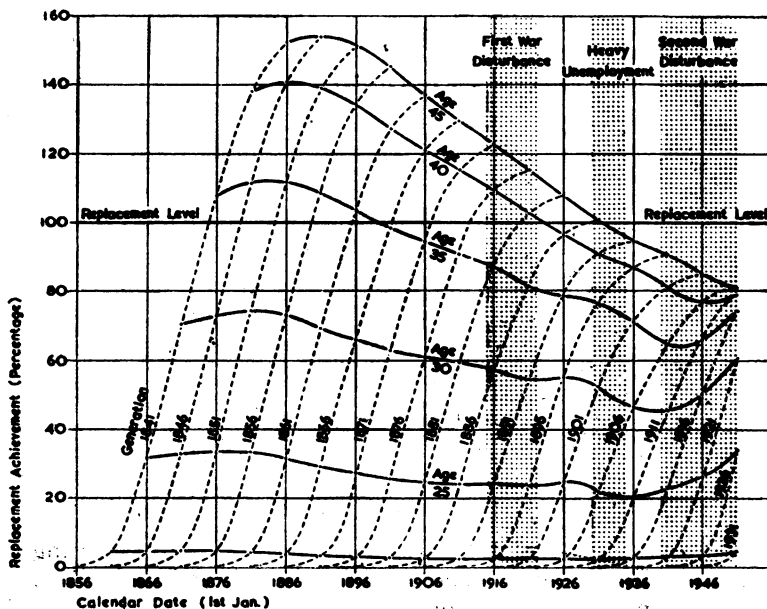
Finally I must refer to the friendly article

by Dr. Blacker in the last issue of the *REVIEW*. He puts great emphasis in it on my being a humanist, a word that has always puzzled me. I am not at all sure of its meaning, and only know that it is not usually regarded as a term of abuse. But I now think I can take it deeper than that. I remember once reading in some book on biology—I am afraid I cannot remember what it was—that the author, in discussing human characteristics, said that all those that we ordinarily call "human" are the ones we share with the animals, and that the only characteristic absolutely peculiar to man is the capacity for cold reasoning of the type we often call "inhuman." I welcome being called human because he evidently means the word in the popular sense, and it shows that he agrees that there is at least one example confirming that man is an animal—and I would add, a wild animal.

Recent Trends in Fertility

THIS diagram is taken from the Registrar-General's Statistical Review of England and

RATES OF REPRODUCTIVE CAPACITY REPLACEMENT BY SUCCESSIVE GENERATIONS 1841-1931. ENGLAND AND WALES.



The year of birth of each generation is written alongside each curve, and the year at which they reached the age of 15 is found at the bottom of each curve.

Wales for the five years 1946-1950.* It shows the degree to which successive generations of women at five-yearly intervals (represented by the broken S-shaped curves) have been replacing themselves with daughters who may be expected to reach reproductive age. This diagram has several striking features. The last generation to achieve a fertility sufficient for self-replacement was born as long ago as 1886. Since this each successive generation, including that of 1906, the last to have completed its reproductive life, has shown a lowered fertility. The fertility of the generation of 1906 was nearly 20 per cent below replacement and it is probable that the 1911 generation will show a similar deficit. In contrast there is a strong indication that every generation after 1911 will show an increase in completed fertility. The 1916 generation, already thirty-five at the time of study, had a fertility at that age 13 per cent in excess of the 1911 and 1906 generations of corresponding age. The 1921 generation at age thirty was 20 per cent ahead of the 1916 generation and 33 per cent ahead of the 1911 generation at corresponding age. The young 1926 generation at age twenty-five had achieved a higher fertility than had any other generation at this age for more than a hundred years. They were already more than a third of the way towards achieving self-replacement and there is little doubt that they will reach this level by the time their fertility is complete. This sharp upward trend dating from the generation of 1911 or a year or two earlier was unexpected. The actual births in the years 1949-1952 exceeded those predicted on the most optimistic of the sixteen projections made by the Statistics Committee of the Royal Commission on Population. It seems probable that the change is not due to any increase in average family size but to an increase in the proportion of women married, particularly in the early years of their reproductive life.

Two Parliamentary Bills

THE Marriage (Certificates of Medical Examination) Bill which Colonel Malcolm

Stoddard-Scott, O.B.E., sought to introduce into Parliament on March 26th, 1954, and about which he wrote in our April number,* met with a sad fate.

Colonel Stoddard-Scott drew nineteenth place in the ballot for the introduction into Parliament of Private Members' Bills; unfortunately the House lost interest in the Bill presented immediately before Colonel Stoddard-Scott's, and was counted out, with the result that the Certificates of Medical Examination before Marriage Bill also fell.

Though this Bill perforce advocated compulsory medical examination and the exchange of certificates between couples about to marry, and the *Eugenics Society*, in its Statement of Aims, supports a voluntary system, eugenists cannot fail to regret this lost opportunity for bringing the whole question before a wider public.

Lord Amulree's Bill to amend the law of abortion, to which the Council of the *Eugenics Society* gave its support, has now been withdrawn. An earlier Bill to the same effect, introduced in the House of Commons by Mr. Reeves, had been so low in the ballot that it failed to secure a second reading debate.

PROFESSOR GLANVILLE WILLIAMS writes: Lord Amulree's Bill, like its predecessor, was an extremely cautious (some might say timid) measure of reform. All that it sought to do was to give statutory sanction to the practice of therapeutic abortion by members of the medical profession. The Bill provided that no registered medical practitioner should be found guilty of the offence of procuring abortion unless it were proved that the act charged was not done for the purpose of preserving the life of the mother; and no registered medical practitioner who acted with the concurring opinion of a second registered medical practitioner should be found guilty of the offence unless it were proved that the act charged was not done for the purpose of preventing injury to the mother in body or health.

Had this measure passed it would have

* By permission of the Controller, H.M.S.O.

* 46, 1, 39.

made little, if any, change in the law, for in essence it merely repeated the effect of Mr. Justice Macnaghten's ruling in the Bourne case, that it is no crime to perform an induction for the purpose of saving the mother's life—the phrase being liberally interpreted to include not only saving her from immediate death but saving her from having her days shortened. Although this was only a direction given by a judge to a jury, and not a decision of an appellate court, it has been widely approved and has been followed in other cases, so that it clearly represents the law. Any lawyer would say that there is no danger of the Bourne case being reversed by a higher court—indeed, so long as it is followed by trial judges, the point cannot reach a higher court, because there is no appeal against an acquittal. This is well known to lawyers, but some medical men who have not given the question special study are still not unnaturally uncertain of the position. If the Bill had been passed, it would have served a useful purpose in drawing attention to the law and putting it beyond any possible doubt; and it would also have stated in express terms that the mother can lawfully be saved from injury quite apart from the saving of her life.

The Bill said nothing on the indications for induction other than the therapeutic one; it did not legalize abortion on ethical, social or eugenic grounds. Under the Bill, as under the present law, these other grounds are relevant only in so far as they bear on the mother's health. The difficulty of putting even such a limited measure on the statute book is an index of the apathy and opposition that have to be faced.

Eugenics Quarterly

Eugenics Quarterly is the new name of the official organ of the American Eugenics Society. Since the advance notice which we printed in our last issue, volume I, number I, of the new journal has reached us.

An Editorial note traces the history of its predecessor, *Eugenical News*, which was

acquired from the Eugenics Record Office in 1920 by the Eugenics Research Association, whose journal it was until the Association was discontinued in 1938.

The first number appeared in January 1916 and consisted of four pages; it was to be a bi-monthly, but its reception encouraged the Editors, Dr. Charles B. Davenport and Dr. H. H. Laughlin, to produce it monthly, and twelve numbers with a total of 94 pages were issued in 1916. It became a quarterly when the American Eugenics Society became its owner in 1939.

Mr. Frederick Osborn is Chairman of the Editorial Board of the new *Eugenics Quarterly*, with Dr. C. Nash Herndon and Mr. Frank Lorimer as its members. Dr. Gordon Allen and Mr. Clyde V. Kiser are Consulting Editors, and Mrs. Helen G. Hammons is Managing Editor. All are to be congratulated on a handsome eighty-page publication, and we wish the *Quarterly* and the American Eugenics Society every success in the future.

OBITUARY

Dean Inge

Mrs. C. P. BLACKER writes: William Ralph Inge was one of the most notable figures of our time, but perhaps not all readers of this REVIEW are aware how considerable a debt the present status of eugenics owes to him.

A friend of Galton, whom he greatly revered, Inge early became interested in the study of vital statistics and sociology. He was probably the first dignitary of the Church to face obloquy by urging that questions of population, birth control and hereditary qualities should be discussed as openly and fully as any other social and economic problems. He was one of the first members of the Council of the *Eugenics Society* and in 1919 delivered the Galton Lecture under the title "The Future of the English Race." This was later printed in his *Outspoken Essays*. In July 1922 the *Edinburgh Review* published an essay by him on "Eugenics" which urged the need of "rational selection" as the obvious remedy

against racial deterioration when natural selection had ceased to operate. This was also reprinted in *Outspoken Essays*, together with several others on kindred subjects, such as "The Birth Rate," "The Idea of Progress" and "The Dilemma of Civilization," the latter being a review of Dr. Müller Lyer's *History of Social Development* and Dr. Austin Freeman's *Social Decay and Regeneration*—both important books at that time. These *Outspoken Essays* were amongst his most successful works and won him a popularity with a section of the public which for some professional and scientific writers was difficult to understand. The fact was that his vigorous, clear and pungent style—the natural expression of his independent, candid mind—made his ideas intelligible to the ordinary thoughtful layman who was seeking to sift the chaff from the wheat in the moral threshing machine of that postwar period. He shocked some conventional people, but he made them think. Armed by "the formidable graces of a first-class controversialist," he was such an effective polemical writer that many of his own cloth feared and disliked him. In his *Christian Ethics and Modern Problems* (1930) Inge discussed many aspects of social and personal ethics; problems of population, sex, divorce and suicide were considered in his terse, direct manner. To him it seemed strange that any Christian should not also be a eugenicist. "If there is to be any improvement in human nature itself we must look to the infant science of eugenics to help us." He held that quality was everything, quantity nothing, and the test of the welfare of a nation was the quality of the men and women it turned out. He was humane but without sentimentality—"Civilization is being poisoned by its own waste products, by the rotten human material that we protect and foster so carefully."

Late in life (1948) he published his last volume of essays, *The End of an Age*. This book shows no diminution of his rich, alert and penetrating mind. He had some caustic and ruefully witty comments to make on the Royal Commission's White Paper issued in September 1945 which had expressed fears of "a gradual fading out of the British people."

The Commission [Inge wrote] had the figures before them. They must have known that the birth-rate has for several years been steadily rising both in this country and in almost all other countries, including some which were not involved in the war. The arrest in the decline of the birth-rate began long before the war, though the Commission ignores the fact. The majority of the Commission were persons who are not known to have made any study of the question: the few experts were known to be advocates of a high birth-rate. The advisability or necessity of putting an end to the senseless multiplication of numbers in an overcrowded island, whose inhabitants depend for their very existence on their power of importing food from abroad, was not even considered. About the same time the so-called Beveridge Act was passed with hardly any opposition. The object of this most mischievous measure was to stimulate artificially the already excessive birth-rate of the slums, imposing fresh burdens on the taxpayer, who was already sinking under an unprecedented load. And then the *Eugenics Society*, of which I had been an enthusiastic member almost from the first, invited the author of this scheme to give the Galton Lecture. It was enough to make my honoured friend, Sir Francis Galton, turn in his grave.

In this short tribute to his memory it is impossible to touch even the fringe of Inge's more profound work on religious philosophy. In this lay the true essence of the man and the inspiration of his finest powers. He was a Christian Platonist, esteeming the mystical experience before all else, and his contribution to neo-Platonic thought is perhaps only now beginning to bear fruit. He may no longer be read for his ideas on eugenics which are now so familiar to us that they have little but historic interest. Yet no one will be the poorer for glancing back at these fearless expressions of (then) unpopular opinions. Above all, one recognizes that disinterested quest and struggle for the absolutely real and good and beautiful which was the driving force of all his work. "All truth is shadow except the last' yet there is immediacy all through."

Mr. J. F. Roxburgh, the first headmaster of Stowe, died on May 6th, 1954, at the age of 66. When, in 1923, at the age of 34, he opened the new school with 99 boys, he was one of the youngest men ever to hold such an appointment.

The growth of the school to 500 boys within a few years, and its acceptance as a public school with a prestige equal to that of the more ancient foundations, is a measure of his outstanding ability and personality.

Mr. Roxburgh became a Fellow of the *Eugenics Society* in 1933.

Lady Denman, G.B.E.

THE sad news of the death of Lady Denman on June 2nd was received as this number of the *EUGENICS REVIEW* was going to press. We hope to print a tribute to her work for family planning in the next issue of the *REVIEW*.

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